

## **ABSTRACT**

**THESIS:** Over My Dead Modem: Death Memorialization and Technology in 21<sup>st</sup> Century United States.

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This research studies the respect for the dead in relation to technological aspects of memorialization. The focus is on the attitudes prevalent in southern Michigan, using data from interviews and surveys of funeral directors and memorial webpage participants. This data helps determine how some aspects of respect for the dead have changed in 21st century Midwestern America. Consideration is given to the attitudes of funeral industry representatives in terms of both physical and virtual memorialization of the dead as well as the opinions of members of memorial webpages contained on the social networking site, Facebook. How respect has changed is evaluated using individual opinions and their attitudes toward memorialization technology. New memorial technology has created new rules and perspectives towards the dead, which are shared by both funeral directors and memorial participants. The newly transitioned perceptions of respect are supported by a variety of platforms encouraging deeper public thinking and engagement towards the treatment of the deceased.